

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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R 200942Z AUG 73

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7962

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 8365

CINCPAC FOR POLAC

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CH, CB

SUBJECT: PRC-CAMBODIA

SUMMARY: PRC STATEMENTS ON AND MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE AUG 15 CESSATION OF BOMBING BY THE UNITED STATES, IN CAMBODIA AS WELL AS PHAN VAN DONG'S STOPOVER IN PEKING AND SIHANOUK'S RETURN TO THE CHINESE CAPITAL POINT UP CONTINUING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PEKING, HANOI, AND THE RGNUC OVER EVENTS IN CAMBODIA. END SUMMARY.

1. PEKING HAS REPORTED FACTUALLY THE US BOMBING CESSATION IN CAMBODIA, CARRIED THE STATEMENTS OF SIHANOUK AND THE RGNUC AS WELL AS HEAVILY EDITED VERSIONS OF HANOI'S STATEMENTS, AND REPORTED RGNUC MILITARY SUCCESSESS AND US EDITORIAL COMMENT THAT THE US AIR WAR IN INDOCHINA ENDED IN "COMPLETE FAILURE."

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THE CHINESE HAVE NOT, HOWEVER, ISSUED ANY STATEMENT

OF THEIR OWN IN RESPONSE TO THE RGNUC

APPEAL OF AUG 15. CHOU EN-LAI PASSED UP THE OPPORTUNITY TO WELCOME SIHANOUK BACK WITH THE USUAL BANQUET AND SPEECH (ALTHOUGH HE DID MEET HIM AT THE TRAIN STATION), THUS LEAVING SOME VERY TEPID WELCOMING REMARKS PUT FORWARD BY THE TIENTSIN REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AS THE PRC'S ONLY PUBLIC COMMENTS THUS FAR ON THE CURRENT SITUATION.

2. PEKING MEDIA CARRIED SIHANOUK'S AUG 15 SPEECH IN TIENTSIN IN WHICH HE GLOATED THAT IT WAS A DAY OF "GROSS DISGRACE FOR US IMPERIALISM" AND WARNED THAT PRESIDENT NIXON MIGHT DISPATCH "SEVERAL DIVISIONS OF SAIGON AND THAI MERCENARY TROOPS AGAINST US." NCNA ALSO REPORTED THE RGNUC STATEMENT ISSUED IN PEKING THE SAME DAY WHICH LAID STRESS ON "CONTINUING AGGRESSION AND INTERFERENCE" BY THE US AND ADDED THE SPECTER OF POSSIBLE "DIRECT INTERVENTION BY US TROOPS."

3. BUT AGAIN PEKING ITSELF HAS ORIGINATED NO REPORT NOR COMMENT ON THE POSSIBILITY OF INTERVENTION BY OTHER FORCES. NCNA IN FACT DELETED THOSE PORTIONS OF DRV STATEMENTS WHICH REFERRED TO POSSIBLE INTERVENTION BY OTHERS, TO A US THREAT TO THE DRV, OR TO US VIOLATIONS OF THE ACCORD. PEKING, FOR EXAMPLE, OMITTED HANOI'S RESPONSE TO RECENT STATEMENTS BY US DEFENSE SECRETARY SCHLESINGER. HANOI'S MENTION OF THE "FAVORABLE CONDITION" CREATED BY THE VIETNAM AND LAOTIAN AGREEMENTS FOR THE CAMBODIAN "CIVILITY" WAS ALSO DELETED IN LINE WITH PEKING'S APPARENT DESIRE TO SEPARATE THE THREE ISSUES.

4. COMMENT: WHILE THE PRC MAY YET FEEL IT IS NECESSARY TO ISSUE SOME STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE RGNUC CALL, THE CHINESE ARE CURRENTLY PLAYING A CAUTIOUS WAITING GAME, DAMPENING ALARMS OVER THE POSSIBILITY OF THAI OR RSVN INTERVENTION, HOLDING DOWN THEIR IDENTIFICATION WITH THE RGNUC, AND DOWN-PLAYING THE IMPACT OF PHNOM PENH'S DIFFICULTIES ON THE U.S. WHILE THERE ARE NO CURRENT PUBLIC SIGNS OF PRC EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE THE NUFK AND PGNUC TO OFFER SOME MINIMUM CONCESSIONS TO PHNOM PENH, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT PEKING HAS ATTEMPTED TO DO THIS THROUGH AN APPROACH TO HANOI. THIS POSSIBILITY IS RAISED BY INDICATIONS THAT SOME STRAINS WERE ATTENDANT UPON PHAM VAN DONG'S STOPOVER IN PEKING. WHEREAS VNA REPORTED THAT PHAM VAN DONG HAD "VERY CORDIAL AND FRIENDLY TALK" WITH SIHANOUK ON CONFIDENTIAL

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AUG 17, IT DID NOT SO CHARACTERIZE THE ATMOSPHERE OF PHAM VAN DONG'S TALKS WITH CHOU AND LI HSIEN-NIEN AUG 16. NCNA ON THE OTHER HAND NOTED THAT CHOU HAD GONE TO THE GUEST HOUSE TO CALL ON THE DRV PREMIER AND HAD HAD A "CORDIAL AND FRIENDLY TALK" WITH HIM.
DEAN

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NNN

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